A Funeral Sermon ON MORDECAI ABBOTT *Esq;*

Preach'd at *Lorimers* Hall, *April* the 7th, 1700.

By THOMAS HARRISON.

Psal. 89. 48. *What Man is he that liveth, and shall not see Death? Shall he deliver his Soul from the hand of the Grave?*

Mat. 24. 46. *Blessed is that Servant, whom his Lord when he cometh, shall find so doing.*

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ERRATA.

PAge 7. line *antepenult.* put the *Comma* after *little.* P. 15. l. *ult.* for *Servant*, read *Service.* P. 18. l. *ult.* r. *they may both themselves acknowledg.* P. 19. l. 2. for *but*, r. *and.*

To the Sorrowful Widow of *Mordecai Abbott* Esq;

MADAM;

THO *I readily comply'd with Your desire in preaching the following Sermon, I could not without some reluctancy consent to the printing of it: But my great Obligations both to Your deceas'd Husband, and Your self, gave Your Request the force of a Command. I rather chose to have my Prudence censur'd than my Gratitude.*

titude. I am ſenſible that I ſtudied it under a great diſ-advantage, both by reaſon of my bodily Indiſpoſition, and thoſe neceſſary Affairs that lay upon my hands; which made me the more unwilling to publiſh it. But if God, who is a Soveraign Agent, ſhall be pleas'd to make it uſe-ful to any that read it, I ſhall find no reaſon to repent its being brought upon the pub-lic Stage.

I hope, Madam, *when you ſeriouſly conſider how ſutable thoſe VVords which I preach'd upon are to the Character of your departed Relative, it may be*

be a means to ſupport You under that ſevere Stroke which ſeparated Him from You. He was a good and a faithful Servant, and I queſtion not but he is now enter'd into the Joy of his Lord. His Converſation upon Earth gives You ſolid ground to hope that he is advanc'd to Heaven, where he is poſſeſt of a compleat Felicity: And that ſweet Savour he has left behind him perfumes his Family, now his Body is cloth'd with Corruption. 'Tis an honour to You that You had ſuch a Huſband; to Your Children, that they had ſuch a Father.

That

That the Lord would ſupply this Loſs by the more eminent Vouchſafement of his Gracious Preſence to You; that he would adopt Your Fatherleſs Children into his own Family; that the choiceſt of his Bleſſings may conſtantly deſcend upon You and Yours, is the unfeigned deſire of,

Madam,

Your humble Servant,

April 15th, 1700.

THO. HARRISON.

Matth. xxv. 21.

His Lord ſaid unto him, Well done good and faithful Servant; thou haſt been faithful over a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many things: enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.

THE great Apoſtle of our Profeſſion, during the publick exerciſe of his Miniſtry upon Earth, ſpoke very much in Parables, according to the ſtile and manner of the Jewiſh Nation: Hereby ſpiritual things were brought down to the Capacities of his Hearers, being repreſented by thoſe earthly ones which were moſt familiar to their

Underſtandings. We have two Parables in this Chapter, my Text is a part of the latter, which begins with the 14*th*, and ends with the 30*th* Verſe. The Scope of this Parable was to perſwade Men to diligence in the Service of God, and to a faithful improvement of the Benefits which they receive from him.

In order to the Explication of my Text, I ſhall conſider four things.

1*ſt*. The Speaker.
2*dly*. The Perſon ſpoken to.
3*dly*. The Speech it ſelf.
4*thly*. The time when it was deliver'd. An account of theſe things will give you further light into the whole Parable.

1*ſt*. The Speaker; *His Lord*. Hereby our Lord intends himſelf, who

who was ready to travel into a far Country, to aſcend to the Emperial Heaven, which is at a vaſt local diſtance from this lowly Earth, wherein he then ſojourned. He hath a double Lordſhip over all Countries, *viz.* Eſſential and Primitive, as the ſecond Perſon in the Trinity; and Derivative and Diſpenſatory, as Mediator. Tho many of the human Race refuſe to ſerve and obey him, they are all his rightful Servants and Subjects: His Dominion over them is not founded upon their Conſent; he is nevertheleſs their Lord, tho they will not own him to be ſo. In ſhort, they that ſlight his Authority now, will find it exercis'd hereafter in the infliction of a deſerved and ſevere Puniſhment upon them. *The unprofitable Servant ſhall be caſt into outer*

Darkneſs, where ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth; as you may ſee in the 30*th* Verſe of this Chapter.

2*dly*. The Perſon ſpoken to: *His Lord ſaid unto Him*. We have an account of the Perſon in the preceding Verſe, and that with reſpect to two things, *viz*. his Receipt, and his Improvement.

1. His Receipt. This Servant had receiv'd *five Talents* from his Maſter. All the Bleſſings that the Children of Men enjoy, flow from Jeſus Chriſt: Temporal good things are diſpenſed by him as the Governor of the World; and ſpiritual, as the Head of the Church. His Favours are not communicated to all in an equal meaſure. We read of one Servant that receiv'd but one Talent, of another that receiv'd two Talents; but this Servant was

intruſted with five. The ſupreme Lord makes a conſiderable difference between one and another by the diſtribution of his Favours. One hath no more than Food and Raiment, juſt enough to ſupply the Neceſſities of Nature; another abounds in Wealth, his Cup is ſo full that it runs over: one lives obſcurely, and makes no figure in the World; another is in an exalted Station: one is very weak in his Intellectuals, another is furniſh'd with a conſiderable ſtock of Parts and Learning. And ſurely the Proprietor of Heaven and Earth may diſpoſe of his own as he pleaſes. They that enjoy the leaſt, have more than they deſerve; they that enjoy the moſt, muſt acknowledg that it is not their Worthineſs, but the ſoveraign Goodneſs of their Lord, that hath made them

to differ from others.

2. His Improvement; *He gained beſides them five Talents more*: he did not hide his five Talents, as his fellow Servant did his one Talent, but laid them out and improv'd them. He gain'd more by his five Talents than the other Man did by his two; his Improvement was proportionable to his Receipt. *To whomſoever much is given, of him ſhall much be requir'd*; Luke 12.48. The more God hath done for us, and beſtow'd upon us, the more will he expect from us. All that we have receiv'd from him ſhould be laid out in his Service, for the advancement of his Honour. I proceed,

3*dly*. To the Speech it ſelf: *Well done good and faithful Servant, thou haſt been faithful in a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many things*:

things: enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord. Herein we have his Lord's Commendation of him, and the Happineſs to which he adjudges him.

1. His Lord's Commendation of him; *Well done good and faithful Servant, thou haſt been faithful in a few things.* He approves of his Service, and commends him for it. I conceive the latter word *faithful* may be explicative of the former Epithet, *good*: the Goodneſs and Excellency of a Servant chiefly conſiſting in his Fidelity to his Maſter. The things wherein he had been faithful are call'd *few*, in compariſon of what ſhould be intruſted with him, and beſtow'd upon him. The moſt that we receive from Chriſt at preſent, is very little compared with what we ſhall receive from him hereafter. There is a

vaſt diſproportion between what we have in hand, and what we have in hope. I may ſay of the Enjoyments, as the Apoſtle doth of the Sufferings, of the preſent time, *that they are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which ſhall be reveal'd in us*, Rom. 8. 18. God will deal more bountifully with his own Children when they come to Heaven, than he ever doth while they remain upon Earth.

2. The Happineſs to which he adjudges him: *I will make thee Ruler over many things; enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.* We muſt not be ſolicitous to accommodate every word in a Parable to that ſpiritual Truth that is taught us by it. I will not determine whether theſe words, *I will make thee Ruler over many things*, do purely ſerve for the ſetting off the Parabolical Narration, or are to be

taken

taken in a ſpiritual ſenſe. According to the former Notion they are expreſſive of a kind Maſter's treatment of a faithful Servant; having experienc'd his Fidelity in ſmaller matters, he entruſts him with greater, and advances him to a higher Station. According to the latter Notion they are expreſſive of that great Felicity which Chriſt will confer upon his faithful Servants in another World. This is further held forth in the following words, *Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord*; whereby is certainly intended the Glory and Bleſſedneſs of the Heavenly State. This is expreſt by *Joy*, becauſe the fruition of it will produce a triumphant and unſpeakable Joy in thoſe that enter into it. Thus *Pſal.* 16. 11. *In thy Preſence is fulneſs of Joy, and at thy right-hand are Pleaſures for evermore.* 'Tis call'd

the

the Joy of his Lord, and that probably on a double account.

(1.) Becauſe in the Viſion and Enjoyment of Chriſt the greateſt part of their Felicity will conſiſt. Tho there be many Jewels in that neverfading Crown of Glory which ſhall be ſet upon the Heads of Believers in another World, this is the brighteſt and moſt ſparkling. When our Lord prays for the final Happineſs of his People, he thus expreſſes himſelf; *Father, I will that they be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou haſt given me*, Joh. 17.24. The Apoſtle therefore deſir'd to depart, that he might be with Chriſt, *Phil.* 1. 23.

(2.) Becauſe his Glory in Heaven is the Exemplar and Pattern of that which his People ſhall enjoy. They ſhall enter into that Joy, which he as their Forerunner

is

is already enter'd into: Not that they ſhall poſſeſs the ſame Glory in all reſpects that Chriſt hath; for his perſonal Glory as the Son of God, and as Mediator, are incommunicable; but they ſhall partake of his Glory according to their Capacity. We are told that they ſhall reign with him, 2 *Tim.* 2. 12. and *that when he ſhall appear they ſhall be like him*, 1 Joh. 3. 2. Their Souls ſhall be perfectly conform'd to his human Soul, in Purity and Felicity, and their *Bodies ſhall be faſhion'd into the likeneſs of his glorious Body*. An entering into this Joy may denote the plenitude and abundance of it: Here Joy enters into us, but hereafter we ſhall enter into Joy; we ſhall be ſwallow'd up in a fathomleſs Ocean of pure and unallay'd Pleaſures. I proceed,

4*thly*. To

4*thly*. To consider the Time when this Speech was deliver'd. If we look back into the 19*th* Verse, we shall find it was *when the Lord came to reckon with his Servants*. Hereby our Lord's second Coming in visible Glory, to judg both Quick and Dead, is evidently intended: Of this we have a particular account in the latter part of the Chapter. The Heavens must contain our ascended Lord till the times of the restitution of all things, and then he shall descend from thence in the Glory of his Father, with all his holy Angels, to convene the whole Race of *Adam* before his Judgment-seat, to call them to an account for the Deeds done in the Body, and to pass a definitive Sentence upon them according to their Works. 'Tis true, there is a particular Judgment which immedi-

mediately follows after Death: When the Soul is ſeparated from the Body, it appears before the Bar of the ſupreme Judg, to give an account of its Stewardſhip, and then receives an irreverſible Sentence of Condemnation, or Abſolution. But I conceive our Lord chiefly reſpects the General Judgment, when the Trial will be public, the Sentence pronounc'd with the moſt awful Solemnity; and the Happineſs or Miſery of every Man compleated.

Having gone thro the words by way of Explication, I might raiſe ſeveral Obſervations from them. But that I may comply with my time, I ſhall only ſpeak to this Propoſition:

Doct. *That they who are faithful Servants of Chriſt in this Life, ſhall be poſſeſt of a very joyful and happy State in the next.* In

In profecuting this Point, I ſhall,

I. Deſcribe the faithful Servants of Chriſt.
II. Give an account of that joyful and happy State of which they ſhall be hereafter poſſeſt.
III. Show the certain Connexion between ſerving Chriſt faithfully in this Life, and the Poſſeſſion of that bliſsful State in the next.
IV. Make ſome Application.

I. I am to deſcribe the faithful Servants of Chriſt, who they are that ſhall be own'd as ſuch by the Supreme Lord, when he comes to Judgment. They may be deſcribed, (1.) From their State. (2.) From their Actions. The former is neceſſarily pre-

ſuppos'd

ſuppos'd to their ſerving Chriſt with Faithfulneſs and Acceptance. The Service which they do for Chriſt conſiſts in the latter.

1. Their State may be deſcrib'd in two Particulars.

(1.) They are juſtified by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt. 'Tis impoſſible that any good Fruit ſhould be brought forth by a Perſon till he be ingrafted into Chriſt, as is plainly taught us by our Lord himſelf; *Joh.* 15. 4, 5. Now being found in Chriſt, and having on his Righteouſneſs, are conjoin'd, becauſe they are inſepable; *Phil.* 3. 9. They who are myſtically one with Chriſt, muſt needs be intereſted in his Mediatory Righteouſneſs, and ſo perfectly juſtified in the ſight of God. Tho, according to the Tenor of the Covenant of Works, the Servant was to be firſt accepted, and

then

then the Perſon on that account; yet according to the Tenor of the Covenant of Grace, the Perſon muſt be firſt accepted, and then the Service. Nothing ſhort of an Inveſtiture with Chriſt's perfect Righteouſneſs can render our Perſons acceptable to the moſt High; and till they become ſo, our moſt ſplendid Services will be abominable in his ſight.

(2.) They are renew'd and ſanctified by the Spirit of Chriſt: Every acceptable Service flows from a Principle of ſpiritual Life. *A corrupt Tree cannot bring forth good Fruit*, Mat. 7. 18. We may as well ſuppoſe that Grapes ſhould be the Product of Thorns, or Figs of Thiſtles, as that an unſanctified Perſon ſhould bring forth Fruit unto God. *They that are in the Fleſh cannot pleaſe God*, Rom. 8. 8. Their Perſons cannot there-

therefore their Actions cannot; becauſe they are the Products of a Nature at variance with him, a Nature that is not, nor cannot be ſubject to his Law. The faithful Servants of Chriſt are conform'd to his Image: The Law of God is firſt written in their Hearts, and then copied out in their Lives.

2. I ſhall deſcribe them from their Actions: Only I would premiſe this, we are not to ſuppoſe that they are altogether free from Sin. The moſt faithful Servants of Chriſt offend in many things; their Errors are ſo many and ſo great, that they cannot fully underſtand them: Their beſt Performances are imperfect, being tinctur'd with the remaining Corruption of their Natures. Should God be ſtrict to mark the Iniquities of their holy things,

they could not ſtand before him. But,

(1.) They deſign the Honour of Chriſt in that Service which they do for him. Many carnal Perſons do ſeveral things that are agreeable to the Reveal'd Will of this glorious Lord, and have a proper tendency to ſerve his Intereſt; but they have no eye to his Glory in any of theſe Actions: they only aim at the advancement of their own Reputation, the promotion of ſome Secular Intereſt, or the quieting of their own Conſciences. But they who ſincerely ſerve the Bleſſed Jeſus, fix upon his Glory as their ultimate end; and what Good they do is propos'd by them as a means ſubſervient to it. The grand reaſon of their practical Holineſs and Obedience is, that they themſelves may not only acknow-

acknowledg the Glory of their great Maſter, but likewiſe proclaim it to others.

(2.) They have a regard to all his Commandments. The Character which Chriſt gives of his Friends, *Joh.* 15. 14. agrees to his faithful Servants, *they do whatſoever he commands them:* They do not ſlight any Precept on which they can diſcern the ſtamp of his Authority: They make conſcience both of firſt and ſecond Table-Duties, of thoſe that are Perſonal and thoſe that are Relative, of the leaſt as well as the greateſt, of the moſt difficult as well as the moſt eaſy.

They will not ſay of any Divine Command, *This is a hard ſaying, who can bear it?* They are ready to do any ſort of Work their Maſter ſets them about, however toilſom and laborious,

however mean and contemptible in the eyes of the World, however coſtly or hazardous: They mind the Duties of every place and ſtation wherein the Providence of God hath ſet them, whether Civil, Domeſtic, or Eccleſiaſtical: They diſcharge their Duty towards their Country, their Families, and the Church to which they are related, with Integrity and Diligence. And this they do, not by conſtraint, but willingly.

(3.) They lay out all the Talents with which they are intruſted in his Service: As they are Stewards, they improve what he hath put into their hands to thoſe Ends and Purpoſes for which they receiv'd it.

Have they a plentiful Eſtate? they do not ſpend it in making proviſion for the Fleſh; nor do they

they covetously hoard it up, but imploy a considerable part of it in supporting the Worship of God, propagating the Gospel of Christ, and relieving those that are in distress. They honour God with their Substance, and with the first-fruits of their Increase. Are they advanc'd to any Station wherein they are capable of serving Christ or his People with their Interest? they improve it to the utmost for such a purpose. They serve the Lord with those Parts and Abilities, with those Gifts and Graces which he hath bestow'd upon them.

II. I proceed to give you an account of that joyful and happy State whereof those faithful Servants shall be hereafter possest: And since it is expresst by *Joy* in my Text, I shall mention some

things which render that State very joyful, or excite a triumphant Joy in thoſe that enter into it; and then give you the Properties of that Joy which reſults from theſe Fruitions.

1ſt. I ſhall mention ſome things which render that State very joyful, or excite a triumphant Joy in thoſe that enter into it.

1. A freedom from thoſe Infelicities which attend a mortal State. As the privation of Good is cauſe of Sorrow, ſo a deliverance from Evil gives a natural riſe to Joy. Will not a Priſoner rejoice when reliev'd from that Dungeon to which he was confin'd, and freed from thoſe Fetters wherewith he was ſhackled? How joyful is a Man when recover'd from a languiſhing Sickneſs, and eas'd of racking Pain? Surely *our Mouths will be filled with Laugh-*

Laughter, and our Tongues with ſinging when we ſhall be perfectly freed from that mighty train of Evils which *Adam*'s Fall brought into this lower World. How will our Spirits exult when we ſhall be ſet at a vaſt diſtance from thoſe things, which often made us ſigh, groan and weep! When we enter into the other World, we ſhall be freed from all ſorrowful, and from all ſinful Evils.

(1.) From all ſorrowful Evils. *There is no more Death, nor Sorrow, nor ſhall there be any more Pain; for former things are paſt away*; Rev. 21. 4. There is no Infirmity of Body, no Poverty, no Diſgrace, no Treachery of pretended Friends, no Perſecution of open Enemies; there are no perplexing Cares, or tormenting Fears, no Temptations from within or without, no Divine Withdrawings. How will the

Soul rejoice when it can ſay, I felt abundance of Pain by reaſon of the diſorder of my Body, but now I enjoy perfect Eaſe: I was rack'd and tortur'd with many Cares and Fears, but now they are all chas'd away as the Shadows of the Evening by the riſing Sun: I was violently buffeted by the wicked one, but he is now bruiſed under my Feet, I have obtain'd a compleat and final Victory over him; I am got out of the reach of his fiery Darts and malignant Suggeſtions.

(2.) From all ſinful Evils. Theſe are moſt grievous to a renewed Soul, when in a right frame; no Preſſure ſo heavy as that Body of Death which he continually carries about with him. Of this the Apoſtle *Paul* made a very doleful Complaint, *Rom.* 7. 34. And from the fountain of in-

dwelling

dwelling Sin many actual Sins do frequently ſtream. But all vitious Habits are entirely rooted out of Believers when tranſlated into another World. No unclean thing can enter into the holy place above. The rags of mortal Defilement drop from them, as *Elijah*'s Mantle did from him when mounting up to that lofty Region. And none of thoſe Sons that are brought to Glory, ever wander from God's Commandments: There is no more diſconformity to the Divine Will in their Actions than there is in their Hearts. And how will the holy Soul exult when freed from thoſe Fetters of Corruption which ſo often kept it at a diſtance from God, and hinder'd it from doing his Will! To what an extaſy of Joy will it be raiſed, when it finds it ſelf without ſpot or wrinkle!

2. The

2. The moral Perfection of our Souls. The ſeparate Spirits of juſt Men are made perfect, *Heb.* 12. 23. As the old Man ſhall then be deſtroy'd, ſo the new Man ſhall come to its full growth, to its higheſt pitch. That moral Image of God which was imperfectly pourtray'd upon us at our Introduction into the Kingdom of Grace, will be brought to its utmoſt Perfection upon our entrance into the Kingdom of Glory. Now we may conſider this moral Perfection both as it reſpects the Underſtanding, and as it reſpects the Will, the two ſupreme Faculties of the human Soul.

(1.) As it reſpects the Underſtanding; and ſo it conſiſts in a Perfection of Knowledg. *Now we ſee thro a Glaſs, darkly; but then face to face: now we know in part, but*

but then ſhall we know even as alſo we are known; 1 Cor. 13. 12. *Then that which is perfect will come, and that which is in part ſhall be done away.* Thoſe things we have at preſent conceal'd from us, ſhall then be unfolded to us: Our Apprehenſions of thoſe things which we are now acquainted with, will be much clearer and more diſtinct than they are while we dwell in this cloudy Region, where ſo many Miſts and Fogs ariſe to obſcure our ſight of Divine and Spiritual Objects, and our Souls are apt to make a judgment of them as repreſented by the Senſes. What bright views ſhall we then have of the Nature and Perfections of the Deity, of the glorious Myſteries that are contain'd in the everlaſting Goſpel, of the eternal Counſel and Deſigns, of the beautiful and harmonious Pro-

Providences of the Eternal King! Knowledg is ſo agreeable to the human Mind, that Men take abundance of Pains, and wade thro many Difficulties in the purſuit of it, and are even tranſported with Joy when they have obtain'd it, tho in a trifling inconſiderable matter. What an elevation then will be given to our Joy, by the cleareſt view of the moſt excellent Objects? What Pleaſure will reſult from thoſe bright Idea's of God and Chriſt, wherewith our Minds ſhall be filled?

(2.) As it reſpects the Will; and ſo it chiefly conſiſts in a Perfection of Love, which is a Grace very ſutable to the triumphant State. There is a vaſt difference between that Love which a militant Saint bears to his Heavenly Father and his Glorious Redeemer, and

and that of a triumphant Saint. Our Love, when we come to Heaven, will bear a juſt proportion to our Knowledg. The Light wherewith our Minds ſhall be irradiated, will be accompanied with a ſutable warmth of Affection. And as a Perfection of Love to God will mightily ennoble our Wills, ſo it will produce ſolid and unſpeakable Joy, foraſmuch as it renders the fruition of God and Chriſt exceeding delightful. There can no ſatisfaction ariſe from the Preſence of an unbeloved Object: and the Pleaſure that we take in the Enjoyment of any thing will be proportionate to its ſhare in our Affections. In ſhort, ſince Believers mourn at preſent to find their Love of the ſupreme Being but as ſmoking Flax, how will they rejoice hereafter when it ſhall be-

becom a triumphant Flame?

3. The full enjoyment of God and Chriſt. Tho the Divine gracious Preſence be afforded to Believers in their way to Heaven, yet the glorious Preſence of God will not be enjoy'd by them till they enter into that bliſsful Habitation. Our *Fellowſhip with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt*, is but partial at preſent, hereafter it will be full. Since God is our chiefeſt Good, the ſupreme Object of our Love, we muſt needs rejoice in the compleat fruition of him. What a triumphant Joy will ſpring up in our Souls, when we ſhall lie in the Embraces of ſuch a glorious Perſon as our *Emanuel*, one who is *the brightneſs of the Father's Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon*: one who is very nearly related to us, being our *elder Brother*,

ther, our Head, our Husband: one who hath laid the moſt endearing Obligations upon us by what he hath done for us. How pleaſant will it be to dwell with Him, who from Eternity undertook for us as our Sponſor, who in the fulneſs of time took upon him our Nature, ſtood in our Law-place, redeem'd us from eternal Miſery, and purchas'd everlaſting Happineſs for us by his Obedience and Sufferings; who lov'd us ſo as to give himſelf a Ranſom for us; *of whoſe fulneſs we have receiv'd, and Grace for Grace*; who hath ſuccor'd us in our Temptations, ſupported us under our Afflictions, and conducted us to the Heavenly *Canaan*.

4. The Society of glorious Angels and glorified Saints. How joyful will that State be, wherein we ſhall dwell and converſe with

with the higheſt Order of created Beings, who have perform'd many eminent Services for us in the houſe of our Pilgrimage, *being all miniſtring Spirits, ſent forth to miniſter to them who ſhall be the Heirs of Salvation?* How pleaſant will it be to dwell and converſe with the whole Aſſembly of triumphant Saints, when free from all thoſe Imperfections which attended them in their mortal State, and very much abated the Comfort of their mutual Society? There will be no Diviſions or Animoſities among them, but perfect Unity, and a flaming Love ſhall reign in all their Hearts.

5. The glorious and bliſsful ſtate of our Bodies. When our great Maſter ſhall come again as a quickning Spirit, he will raiſe the Bodies of his Members from their

their Beds of Duſt, and reunite them unto their Souls: And tho for ſubſtance they will be the ſame that they were before their Diſſolution, yet the Qualities will be greatly alter'd. The Bodies of Believers ſhall be reform'd with all glorious Perfections ſutable to their Nature, and partake with their Souls in conſummate Bleſſedneſs in a glorious Immortality; 1 *Cor.* 15. The Soul muſt needs have a great Affection for its Body, and when ſeparate from it, deſires a reunion. How will it exult then when the Marriage-knot ſhall be retied, and it ſhall find ſuch a vaſt and happy change made in its dear Relative ſince the doleful Separation? How will it rejoyce to poſſeſs an incorruptible, a ſpiritual, a glorious and an immortal Body?

2*dly*. I ſhall give you the Properties of that Joy which reſults from theſe Fruitions, in two particulars: 'Tis endleſs, and 'tis undecaying.

(1.) 'Tis endleſs. That fulneſs of Joy which is in God's immediate Preſence, laſts for evermore: It muſt needs be ſo, becauſe that Happineſs whence it reſults will be of a perpetual duration. Thoſe Evils from which the glorified Saints are freed, ſhall no more return upon them; they ſhall never be depriv'd of the Beatific Viſion of God, nor diſlodg'd from the immediate Embraces of their dear Redeemer. Tho the firſt *Adam* was ſoon expell'd the Earthly Paradiſe, the Seed of the ſecond *Adam* ſhall never be driven out of the heavenly: Their Souls ſhall no more be divorc'd from their

their Bodies. In ſhort, when millions of millions of Ages are run out in the fruition of Heavenly Pleaſures, their Happineſs will be no nearer to its Period than at the firſt moment of their admiſſion into the Regions of Glory.

(2.) 'Tis undecaying. As they ſhall not ceaſe to rejoice, ſo their Joy will never be impair'd or diminiſh'd: There ſhall be no Clouds to obſcure the Splendor of that Eternal Day. Our Happineſs will be always the ſame, and our Perception of it equal throughout an endleſs Eternity. The long Enjoyment of Celeſtial Pleaſures will not make us to grow weary of them. There is an infinite variety in God, and whatever is truly deſirable is eminently injoy'd in him. An infinite Good

produces always the ſame pure equal compleat Joy, becauſe it ariſes from its intrinſic Perfection that wants no foil to commend it. In a word, this Joy is no raviſhing Rapture, but a conſtant height of Affection. Thus I diſmiſs the ſecond General Head. I muſt but touch upon the

III. To ſhow the certain Connexion between ſerving Chriſt faithfully in this Life, and the poſſeſſion of that bliſsful State in the next. There is no Connexion by way of Merit between the one and the other. Eternal Life is the free Gift of God, and therefore not the proper Reward of our Services. Since we owe a perfect Obedience to our Lord, could we yield that, it would not entitle us to the Glory of Heaven. But there being many flaws

and

and defects in our Obedience, 'tis very abſurd to claim ſo great a Felicity on that account. Tho the Word of God aſſures us, that the poſſeſſion of Heaven ſhall certainly follow upon the faithful ſerving of Chriſt on Earth. I might produce ſeveral Texts to this purpoſe, but two ſhall ſuffice.

We are aſſur'd, that Chriſt *will render eternal Life to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for Glory, Honour and Immortality*; Rom. 2. 6, 7. *He that ſoweth to the Spirit, ſhall of the Spirit reap Life everlaſting*; Gal. 6. 8. This glorious Judg will at the grand Aſſize pronounce a Sentence upon every one ſutable to the kind and nature, tho not to the deſert of his Works. *Then ſhall Men return and diſcern between the righteous and the wicked; between*

him that ſerveth God, and him that ſerveth him not. Since all Chriſt's faithful Servants are juſtified and ſanctified, they ſhall certainly be glorified. They who have a right to Heaven, and a meetneſs for it, ſhall infallibly enter into that delectable Habitation. There is ſuch Connexion between the Fruits of electing Love, that they who have receiv'd any one, ſhall certainly receive all the reſt. I proceed,

IV. To make ſome Application.

1. How highly doth it concern us to enquire, whether we are the faithful Servants of Chriſt or not! Since this is a matter of everlaſting importance, how ſtrict ſhould we be in the examination of our ſelves, that we may come to a due reſult in our own Minds about

 it?

it? Let us ſeriouſly conſider whether the Character that hath been given of ſuch Perſons agrees to us. We have a great deal of Work to do, are we diligent in it? Some Talents are intruſted with us all, do we carefully improve them? If we loiter and are unfaithful, we cannot conceal our Infidelity from our Omniſcient Lord, tho our fellow Servants may be unacquainted with it. Deceitful Pleas and Excuſes will not avail us, when we ſtand before that Judg, whoſe Eyes are as a flame of Fire.

2. How ſad will the Condition of unfaithful Servants be in the awful day of Account! If they that are faithful ſhall enter into the Joy of their Lord, then they that are unfaithful ſhall be doom'd to eternal Sorrow. As there is a vaſt difference between their State

and their Actions at preſent, ſo their Condition will be vaſtly different hereafter. They that ſpend all their time in the Service of Sin and Satan, will receive dreadful Wages, even everlaſting Death, at the end of it. The Talents which are now intruſted with them, will inflame their Reckoning when they ſtand at their Lord's Tribunal: Since they have ſown to the Fleſh, they ſhall of the Fleſh reap Corruption. Think of this, O Sinners, before it be too late. That Time, thoſe Eſtates, thoſe Opportunities, thoſe natural and acquir'd Parts which you now profuſely ſquander away, muſt e'er long be accounted for. In a ſhort time Chriſt will ſay to every one of you, *Give an account of thy Stewardſhip, for thou mayſt be no longer Steward.* And how ſad an Account will you give if taken

out of the World in your preſent ſtate? Think what Horror will ſeize you (if not extremely ſtupid) when Death ſhall ſit upon your quivering Lips, and your Souls ſhall be juſt ready to take their flight into an eternal World! How dreadful will the thoughts of appearing before the Lord be to you, when ſenſibly approaching his Judgment-Seat! Think of that awful Day when *Chriſt ſhall be reveal'd from Heaven in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance upon them that know not God, and obey not the Goſpel.* How dreadful a Spectacle will the Supreme Judg be to you who have ſlighted and contemned him, when he ſhall appear in a pompous manner, arm'd with Almighty Power, and attended with a numerous Train, to pronounce an irreverſible Sentence of Condemnation upon you?

you? Can you bear to dwell in blackneſs of Darkneſs, and to lie in unquenchable Flames with Legions of Devils?

Tho you have highly offended your Lord, 'tis not yet too late to find Mercy. He now ſits upon a Throne of Grace, and extends his Golden Scepter to the greateſt Criminals. Come to Chriſt by Faith, that you may be intereſted in his Righteouſneſs, which will free you from the Guilt of your former Infidelity; and receive that Grace from him which will capacitate you to ſerve him faithfully the remainder of your days. Know that many who were once in the ſame caſe with your ſelves, are now reigning in Life, thro Jeſus Chriſt their Lord.

3. What Encouragement have Believers to fidelity in the Service of their Lord! That aſſurance which

which you have of a future Felicity, ſhould encourage you to lay out your ſelves to the utmoſt in the Service of Chriſt at preſent. The Improvement which the Apoſtle makes of the Doctrine of the Reſurrection, 1 *Cor.* 15. *ult.* is a natural Improvement of this Doctrine; *Therefore, my beloved Brethren, be ye ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch as ye know that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord.* Since Chriſt will beſtow ſuch an unſpeakable Happineſs upon you hereafter, how willing ſhould you be to do your utmoſt to ſerve him here? The Joy that is ſet before you ſhould carry you chearfully thro all the fatigues and difficulties of your preſent State.

4. This may comfort us under the loſs of our Godly Friends and Relations. 'Tis true, the better they

they were, the greater loſs we ſuſtain'd by their removal. But the Conſideration of what they have gain'd by a tranſlation into another World, may very much lighten the Affliction, and chear our Spirits under it. Are we ſatisfied that our deceaſed Friends were good and faithful Servants of Chriſt? we may conclude that they are enter'd into the Joy of their Lord, and therefore have paſs'd thro a very happy Change.

And I may reaſonably ſuggeſt this to the ſurviving Relatives of that Excellent Perſon whoſe Death hath occaſion'd this Diſcourſe: I think the words of my Text were juſtly applicable to him. To give his juſt Character might render me ſuſpected of Flattery by thoſe who were unacquainted with him. Ever ſince I had the honour of his acquaintance, I took

him

him to be a ſincere Chriſtian; and the better I knew him, the more I was confirm'd in that Opinion. I found him a ſolid and ſerious, not a flaſhy and airy Profeſſor; one that had a great concern not only for the Welfare of the Nation, but for the Intereſt of Chriſt in it. His Lord had intruſted him with ſeveral Talents; he had a plentiful Income, was in an eminent Station, had great natural Abilities, and a general Reputation among all ſorts of Perſons. And did he bury theſe Talents? No, he laid them out in the Service of his Lord. How freely and liberally did he contribute towards the relief of thoſe that were in want, and the propagation of the Goſpel? I never knew him backward to the promotion of any good deſign; but were it convenient, could give many Inſtances of his readineſs to

do

do good both by his Purſe and Intereſt. He was lovely in every Capacity, a good Subject, a true Patriot, a uſeful and honourable Member of the Church of Chriſt, a loving Husband, a careful Father, a kind Maſter, and a faithful and affectionate Friend. But he is gone, his place ſhall know him no more: having *ſerv'd his own Generation by the Will of God, he is fallen aſleep*; God hath call'd him away in the midſt of his days, when many unprofitable Servants are left behind. Such a loſs, ſo Publick, ſo General, ought to be bewailed. Now a righteous Man is periſh'd, a merciful Man is taken away, and we ought to lay it to heart. But let us not mourn as thoſe that are without hope. It would be a good Improvement of this Providence, if Men of Intereſt and Eſtate would imitate his

Exam-

Example. That covetous narrow Spirit which prevails among the Profeſſors of this day, is a great Reproach to our holy Religion.

I cloſe with a ſhort Addreſs to the mournful Relations of this worthy Perſon: Have a care of repining at the Hand of God, tho you have receiv'd a ſevere ſtroke. He that has taken him from you, firſt gave him to you, and had a ſoveraign Right to diſpoſe of him. It highly becomes Creatures and Subjects to acquieſce in the Will of the ſupreme Lord. God is righteous in all his Ways, and holy in all his Works, and his Will is always agreeable to infinite Wiſdom. The ways of his Providence are all Mercy and Truth, even when he ſeems to walk contrary to them. For your Comfort, think of that happy State into which your deareſt Friend is enter'd;

Death

Death was a bleſſed Gain to him; he has thereby obtain'd a Poſt not to be exchanged for the higheſt Preferment in the Court of an Earthly Prince. Be followers of him as he was of Chriſt. Study to ſerve your Lord in your Day and Generation with uncorrupted Fidelity; ſo ſhall you alſo be own'd by him in the day of Account: he will then ſay to you, *Well done good and faithful Servants; You have been faithful over a few things, I will make you Ruler over many things: enter ye into the Joy of your Lord.*

FINIS.